

theology and their meaning. It is carefully edited and a helpful index of subjects contributes to its usefulness.

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Borgen, Peder. *Early Christianity and Hellenistic Judaism*. T & T Clark: Edinburgh, 1996. xi + 376 pp. Cloth, \$49.95.

Peder Borgen is a Scandinavian scholar at the University of Trondheim who is particularly distinguished for his studies on the relationship between the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptics. This book is not a monograph, but a collection of eleven of Borgen's previously published essays, along with three that appear in this volume for the first time. While such a compilation might be dismissed as one scholar's attempt to get added "mileage" out of his research, that accusation would be unfair in this case. These essays are not disparate, but have a logical focus in four significant areas of New Testament scholarship: Jews and Christians in the Greco-Roman World, Johannine studies, essays on Acts and the Pauline corpus, and studies in the Book of Revelation and apocalyptic literature.

Befitting the title of this book, Borgen makes rich use of both biblical and especially nonbiblical sources, placing the scriptural material directly in the context of the ancient world through relevant archaeological inscriptions, rabbinical traditions, and such contemporary authors as Philo Judaeus. Borgen's research on the relationship between Jews/Christians and their pagan environment I found most illuminating. This material shows that we must guard against any tendency to collectivize "the Jews," as is too often done in interpreting the NT. The bewildering variety in Jewish belief and practice is particularly evident in the Jews' association with the gentile world at this time, where their contacts ranged from strict avoidance to lenient indulgence. Geography also played a role. Whereas in Jerusalem, for example, Jewish participation in the Roman military was unheard of, Jewish troops were very widely used in Ptolemaic Egypt.

Another locus of great interest in these essays is the question of whether or not the author of the Fourth Gospel used the Synoptics in writing his own. Borgen champions the view that John used an oral tradition that was independent of the Synoptics, a stance which occasioned his celebrated dialogue with F. Neirynck, who concludes that the Synoptics were indeed sources for the Fourth Evangelist. Their interchange is nicely reported in this book, which was updated sufficiently to note that Raymond E. Brown, in his recent magisterial *The Death of the Messiah*, supports Borgen's position of Johannine independence.

In this debate, and in his subsequent research on the relationship between Acts and the Pauline letters, Borgen relies heavily on textual analysis and parallels/nonparallels in the two bodies of material. While this will delight New Testament scholars, nonspecialists may well be put off by the meticulous detail and vast bibliography. But Borgen skillfully summarizes his argumentation through brief and pellucid conclusions at the close of most of his chapters, which any informed reader will find of great value.

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